

Symbols of America

Grade Level: First Grade

Presented by: Casey Sherrer and Susan Slattery, Schertz Elementary, Schertz, TX

Length of Unit: Three weeks

I. ABSTRACT

This unit will teach first graders about the symbols that define America. The major areas that this unit will focus on are: The President, The Liberty Bell, The American Flag, The Bald Eagle, The Statue of Liberty, and Mount Rushmore. *Symbols of America* will excite students and bring about a sense of patriotism in the classroom. American civilization, math, geography, language arts, and art are some of the subject areas covered. The students will understand the pride that is incorporated into all the symbols of America.

II. OVERVIEW

- A. Specific content from Core Knowledge to be covered includes: The current United States President, the American Flag, the Bald Eagle, the Statue of Liberty, Mount Rushmore, and the Liberty Bell.
- B. Specific skills to be taught are observing, communicating, comparing, classifying, applying, map skills, listening skills, computer skills, role playing skills, and following directions. This will be accomplished through individual and cooperative groups.
- C. Student Learning Goals/Objectives
Students will be able to identify and understand the reason for *Symbols of America*.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For Teachers:
 - Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your First Grader Needs to Know*. New York, Doubleday: 1991.
 - Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your Kindergarten Needs to Know*. New York, Doubleday: 1996.
 - Bedik, Shelley. *Our President: Bill Clinton*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1993. ISBN 0-590-47126.
- B. For Students:
 - Letter writing
 - Map skills
 - Question/Asking Words
 - Grouping and Counting numbers and sets
 - Pledge of Allegiance

IV. RESOURCES

- Brown, Marc. *Arthur Meets the President*. New York, New York: Trumpet Club, 1991. ISBN 0-440-84634-X.
- Cwiklik, Robert. *Bill Clinton Our 42nd President*. Brookfield, Connecticut: Millbrook Press, 1993. ISBN 1-56294-387-1.
- Doherty, Craig and Katherine Doherty. *Mount Rushmore*. Woodbridge, Connecticut: Blackbirch Press, 1995. ISBN 1-56711-108-4.
- Greene, Carol. *Bill Clinton: Forty-second President of the United States*. Chicago: Childrens Press, 1995. ISBN 0-516-04267-X.

Maestro, Betsy and Giulio Maestro. *The Story of the Statue of Liberty*. New York, New York: MacMillian-McGraw-Hill, 1986. ISBN 0-02-146663-7.

Milliken, Linda. *Patriotic Symbols Activity Book*. Dana Point, CA: EDUPRESS, 1996. ISBN 1-56472-075-6.

Quiri, Patricia Ryon. *A True Book: The Bald Eagle*. Grolier Publishing Co., Inc., Danbury, Connecticut, 1998. ISBN 0-516-20621-4.

Ryan, Pam Munoz. *The Flag We Love*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0-88106-845-4.

Waters, Kate. *The Story of the White House*. New York, New York: Scholastic, 1991. ISBN 0-590-43335-0.

V. LESSONS

A. Lesson One: Who is the President of the United States?

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify the President of the United States.
 - b. Students will be able to locate Arkansas and Washington D.C. on a map.
2. Materials
 - a. Brown, Mark. *Arthur Meets the President*.
 - b. Poster of Current United States President – Bill Clinton
 - c. Symbols of America journal - See Appendix A (1-2)
 - d. *Bill Clinton: Forty-second President of the United States*.
 - e. Map of the United States – one per student
3. Prior Knowledge for Students
Mapping skills
4. Key Vocabulary
President
5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Read *Arthur Meets the President* by Marc Brown.
 - b. Teacher reviews story with the students.
 - c. Teacher asks questions to see if students know the current United States President.
 - d. Teacher shows picture of President Clinton.
 - e. Teacher reads *Bill Clinton: Forty-second President of the United States*.
 - f. Teacher asks questions to review story and information about Bill Clinton.
 - g. Students keep a running map of locations for various American symbols. Locate Arkansas on the map. Students color Arkansas because that is the home place of Bill Clinton.
 - h. Teacher asks, “What is the name of the home where President Clinton lives?” and “Where is the White House located?” Color in the Washington D.C. on running map of symbols.
 - i. Students will keep a journal containing a brief summary of what they have learned. Teacher will assemble journal, and students will color the cover page - See Appendix A (1). Teacher will write a brief review of the president for students to write in their journal – See Appendix A (2).
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding by looking at map and journal.

B. Lesson Two: The White House

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify the White House.

- b. Students will be able to create a suitcase, clothing, and a transportation pass out of construction paper.
 - c. Students will be able to review seasons and weather condition in planning their trip.
 2. Materials:
 - a. *The Story of the White House* by Kate Waters.
 - b. Construction paper
 - c. Basic school supplies
 - d. Empty cereal boxes – one for each student that has been covered with paper.
 - e. Pattern pieces of different types of clothing one might pack on a trip.
 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
Seasons
 4. Key Vocabulary:
Travel, season, and transportation
 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher reviews previous lesson.
 - b. Teacher reads *The Story of the White House* by Kate Waters.
 - c. Teacher discusses a trip the class will take to visit the White House.
 - d. Teacher discusses various forms of transportation that they could take if they were planning an actual trip. Students decide which would be the quickest form of transportation.
 - e. With teacher's help, students create pretend transportation passes.
 - f. Teacher creates visitor tour passes for the students to wear on their trip the following day.
 - g. Teacher provides covered cereal boxes for each student.
 - h. Students create a suitcase using cereal boxes for their trip to the White House.
 - i. Teacher reviews seasons and weather conditions for the area to which they will travel. Students create appropriate clothing made out of construction paper that they might need during their trip. Student places these clothes into his/her suitcase.
 - j. Teacher takes appropriate measures from student's parents in acceptance in using the Internet.
 6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through their participation in artwork.
- C. Lesson Three: Our Trip to the White House**
1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify various rooms of the White House.
 2. Materials:
 - a. computer with Internet access
 - b. Symbols of America journal
 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
The White House is the home of the President of the United States.
 4. Key Vocabulary:
Rooms of the White House that will be discussed throughout the lesson.
 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher reviews previous lesson.
 - b. Teacher reminds students that they are taking a trip to the White House.
 - c. Teacher arranges access to the Internet.
 - d. Teacher locates the following on the internet:

www.whitehouse.gov and/or
www.whitehouse.gov/WH/kids/num/where/num

- e. Teacher takes the students on a tour of various rooms allowed on the Internet. Teacher reads and discusses the description on each page for the students.
 - f. Teacher writes a brief description about the White House. Students copy this description in their journal – See Appendix A (3).
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through their participation.

D. Lesson Four: The President’s Job

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify some of the responsibilities of the President of the United States.
 - b. Students will be able to listen to other political figures describe their responsibilities.
 - c. Students will learn about various forms of voting.
 - d. Students will be able to create their own political campaign signs.
2. Materials:
 - a. Articles and newspaper clipping
 - b. Outside political figures
 - c. Ballot box
 - d. Materials for campaign signs
 - e. Appendix B
 - f. M & M’s snack size candies for each student
3. Prior Knowledge for students:
Sorting
4. Key Vocabulary:
Campaign, responsibility, voting, tally marks, ballot box, and politics
5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher collects articles out of magazines or newspapers concerning the President’s job.
 - b. Teachers lead discussion about the President’s job.
 - c. Teacher contacts outside political figures who might be able to speak to the students about their job and responsibilities.
 - d. Teacher discusses politics and voting. Students learn about the different forms of voting (hands, secret ballots, tally marks). Teacher asks students to raise their hand if they like M&M’s – this is one form of voting. Teacher and students discuss the different colored candies in the snack size M&M’s bag. On the bottom of Appendix B, students will mark with a check their favorite color candy – this is another form of voting. Students sort candies on Appendix B. Teacher shows them how to tally the total number of colored candies.
 - e. Students learn about political signs and how they help the person running for office.
 - f. Students create their own political sign.
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through completion of Appendix B, and their participation in lesson.

E. Lesson Five: If I were President, I would ...

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to pretend that they are President of the United States.

- b. Students will be able to discuss a concern they have with the President through a letter writing activity.
2. Materials:
 - a. letter writing material – paper, envelopes, pencil
 - b. address of the White House
3. Prior Knowledge for students:

Letter writing skills
4. Key Vocabulary:

Address, and letter
5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher reviews previous lesson.
 - b. Teacher asks students if they were President, what would they do to help the American people.
 - c. Students draw a picture of something they would do to help America.
 - d. After students draw this picture, they will write a basic letter to the President of the United States. The students will write telling the President about their ideas to help the people.
 - e. Teacher will review each letter. Make changes if necessary.
 - f. Send letters to the President at this address:

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C. 20500
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding by their picture and letter.

F. Lesson Six: The American Flag

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify the American Flag both past and current.
 - b. Students will be able to identify the creator of the American Flag.
 - c. Students will be able to create a flag out of various art materials.
2. Materials:
 - a. construction paper
 - b. glue
 - c. scissors
 - d. Symbols of America journal
 - e. *The American Flag* by Patricia Ryon Quiri.
 - f. *The Flag We Love* by Pam Munoz Ryan.
3. Prior Knowledge for students:

Students should be able to identify the current American Flag.
4. Key Vocabulary:

Flag, honor, respect, creator
5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher reads *The Flag We Love* by Pam Munoz Ryan.
 - b. Teacher discusses and reviews the story. Ask students what the flag means to them, why is important, and how do we honor the flag.
 - c. Teacher asks, “Who is the person who created the flag?”
 - d. Teacher discusses Betsy Ross, the creator of the American Flag. If Internet is available – www.libertynet.org/iha/betsy/flagtale.html
 - e. Teacher discusses the first American Flag. This flag only had thirteen stars on a blue field and the thirteen stripes to represent the first thirteen colonies.
 - f. Students create an American Flag (past and present) using tear art.

- g. Teacher writes a brief summary about the creator of the American Flag. Students write it in their journal – See Appendix A (4).
 - 5. Evaluation/Assessment
Teacher will assess students understanding completion of lesson assignments.
- G. Lesson Seven: The Pledge of Allegiance**
- 1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to recite and comprehend the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - b. Students will be able to respect the flag.
 - 2. Materials:
 - a. Song – *You're a Grand Old Flag* by George M. Cohan
 - b. Pledge of Allegiance bulletin board
 - c. Symbols of America journal
 - 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
American Flag; recite the Pledge of Allegiance
 - 4. Key Vocabulary:
Pledge allegiance, independence, liberty, and justice
 - 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher review previous lesson.
 - b. Teacher asks, “How do we honor our flag?”
 - c. Teacher discusses why we say the pledge of allegiance.
 - d. Teacher prepares a bulletin board that has the phrases of the pledge of allegiance missing. Students will recite pledge of allegiance and place the phrases in the appropriate spaces.
 - e. Teacher will write a brief summary about the flag, and students will copy it into their journal – See Appendix A (5).
 - 6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through their journal.
- H. Lesson Eight: Living History of the Statue of Liberty**
- 1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify the Statue of Liberty.
 - b. Students will be able to locate the state in where the Statue of Liberty rests.
 - c. Students will be able to ask basic questions concerning the Statue of Liberty.
 - d. Students will be able to listen and comprehend the poem on the base of the Statue.
 - 2. Materials:
 - a. *The Story of the Statue of Liberty* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro
 - b. Map
 - c. Symbols of America journal
 - d. Costume of the Statue of Liberty
 - e. Appendix D (1-5), crayons, tape and/or glue
 - f. Supplies needed for torch – paper towel rolls, paper plate, red cellophane, and paint.
 - g. Question/asking word-flip book – Appendix C.
 - 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
Seven continents
 - 4. Key Vocabulary:
Question/Asking words, statue, and interview
 - 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Read *The Story of the Statue of Liberty* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro.
 - b. Discuss the features of the Statue of Liberty. The crown has seven points for the seven continents and seas. There is poem on the base of the statue –

Teacher reads and discusses with students the meaning of the poem. In her left hand she has a tablet that has the date of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In her right hand, she holds a torch to light the way and welcome the people coming to America. On her feet, she has a broken chain to show progress to freedom.

- c. On a world map, locate the seven seas and the seven continents.
 - d. Students will understand and use various question and asking words. Words such as who, why, when, where, how, can, and what.
 - e. Students will create a flip chart of these words to help them remember the question/asking words – See Appendix C. Students will brainstorm questions they might have if they were meeting the Statue of Liberty.
 - f. Teacher or guest dresses up like the Statue of Liberty.
 - g. Students ask questions that they brainstormed.
 - h. After visit, students create a large size poster of the Statue of Liberty Appendix D (1-5). Students can also create a torch out of paper towel tubes and cellophane wrap for the flame.
 - i. Teacher writes a brief review of the Statue of Liberty, and students copy it into their journal – See Appendix A (6).
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through their questioning ability, and through their completion of artwork.

G. Lesson Nine: Liberty Bell

1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to locate Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on a map.
 - b. Students will be able to identify the Liberty Bell.
 - c. Students will be able to understand why the Liberty Bell is an American Symbol.
2. Materials:
 - a. Symbols of America journal
 - b. Map
 - c. Book – Liberty Bell
 - d. Styrofoam cups
 - e. Foil
 - f. Yarn
 - g. Markers
3. Prior Knowledge for students:
Declaration of Independence
4. Key Vocabulary:
Bell, Declaration of Independence
5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher reads book.
 - b. Teacher discusses the reason behind the Liberty Bell.
 - c. Students locate Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on their map.
 - d. Students create a Liberty Bell out of Styrofoam cups and foil. The crack can be made from a black permanent marker.
 - e. Teacher writes a brief summary about the Liberty Bell, and students copy it into their journal – See Appendix A (7).
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students' understanding through artwork.

H. Lesson Ten: The Bald Eagle

1. Objective/Goal:

- a. Students will be able to identify a bald eagle.
 - b. Students will be able to understand why the bald eagle is an American Symbol.
 - c. Students will be able to identify animals that are endangered.
 - d. Students will be able to create a collage of endangered animals.
2. Materials:
 - a. Symbols of America journal
 - b. *The Bald Eagle* by Patricia Ryon Quiri
 3. Prior Knowledge:
 - a. Eagle is a type of bird.
 3. Key Vocabulary:
Endangered, collage, and extinct
 4. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Read *The Bald Eagle* by Patricia Ryon Quiri.
 - b. Teacher and students discuss the following –
Why did the United States decide on the bald eagle as a symbol?
Who decided that the United States needed a bald eagle as a symbol?
Where do most of these birds live? How many of you have seen a bald eagle? This will lead into the following discussion.
 - c. Teacher discusses that the bald eagle is now in danger of becoming extinct. Teachers ask if any of the students know the definition of endangered and extinct.
 - d. Teacher researches a list of other animals that are endangered.
 - e. Students create a collage of endangered animals either by cutting and pasting or by drawing.
 - f. Teacher writes a brief paragraph about the bald eagle. Students copy into their journal – See Appendix A (8).
 5. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher assesses students understanding through their participation and collage.
- I. Lesson Eleven: The Four Famous Presidents that are Carved out of Stone.**
1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be able to identify and understand why the four Presidents (Washington, Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Jefferson) are on Mount Rushmore.
 - b. Students will be able to locate and color South Dakota on a map.
 2. Materials:
 - a. pictures of the Washington, Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Jefferson
 - b. *Mount Rushmore* by Craig and Katherine Doherty.
 - c. Symbols of America journal
 - d. Map
 - e. Black and white construction paper
 - f. Overhead projector
 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
 4. Key Vocabulary:
Presidents Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Jefferson, carving, silhouettes
 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Read *Mount Rushmore* and discuss.
 - b. Teachers ask, “Why do you think this man would want to carve such a mountain?” Give a brief overview of the four presidents that are on the mountain.
 - c. Locate South Dakota on map. Have students color in South Dakota.

- d. Have students choose four people they would carve on a mountain. Have students draw them on a piece of paper. Have students tell you why they chose those four people.
 - e. In observance of President's Day, the teacher could create silhouettes of each student. This is traditionally seen at this time of year with Presidents Washington and Lincoln.
 - f. Teacher writes a brief summary about Mount Rushmore, and students copy it into their journal – See Appendix A (9).
6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher assesses students understanding through their completion of Appendix 9.
- J. Lesson Twelve: Principal of the Day!**
1. Objective/Goal:
 - a. Students will be introduced to a mock election.
 2. Materials:
 - a. Ballots – See Appendix A (10).
 - b. two students to run in this election
 - c. campaign managers – campaign signs, and buttons
 - d. question/asking words flip books
 - e. appropriate setting for mock election
 3. Prior Knowledge for students:
Voting, campaign signs, responsibility, question/asking skills, and role-play
 4. Key Vocabulary:
Debate and review vocabulary from previous lessons
 5. Procedures/Activities
 - a. Teacher chooses a student to run for Principal of the Day (two classes should work together on this activity).
 - b. Student assembles campaign ideas and materials.
 - c. Hold a mock debate.
 - d. Students vote for candidate of their choice.
 - e. The winner will assist the Principal for a specific amount of time.
 6. Assessment/Evaluation
Teacher will assess students understanding through participation of this lesson.

Cumulative Review:

Have students review Symbols of America by playing Symbols of America Bingo. Students will color, cut, and paste their own bingo card. Teacher will call out symbols as they cover them. Students can use red, white, and blue candy to cover symbols. See Appendix E and F.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books:

- Bedik, Shelley. *Our President: Bill Clinton*. New York: Scholastic, 1993. ISBN 0-590-47126-0.
- Brown, Marc. *Arthur Meets the President*. New York, New York: Trumpet Club, 1991. ISBN 0-440-84634-X.
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Weil, Ann. *Betsy Ross – Designer of Our Flag*. New York, N.Y., Bobbs – Merrill Co., Inc, 1983. ISBN 0-02-042120-6

Zimelman, Nathan. *How the Second Grade Got \$8,205.50 to Visit the Statue of Liberty*. Morton Grove, Illinois, Albert Whitman and Company, 1992. ISBN 0-807-3431-5.

Video:

All About America. New Castle Communication, Inc. 1996. ISBN 1-55511-927-1.

Internet:

www.libertynet.org/iha/libertybell/index/html

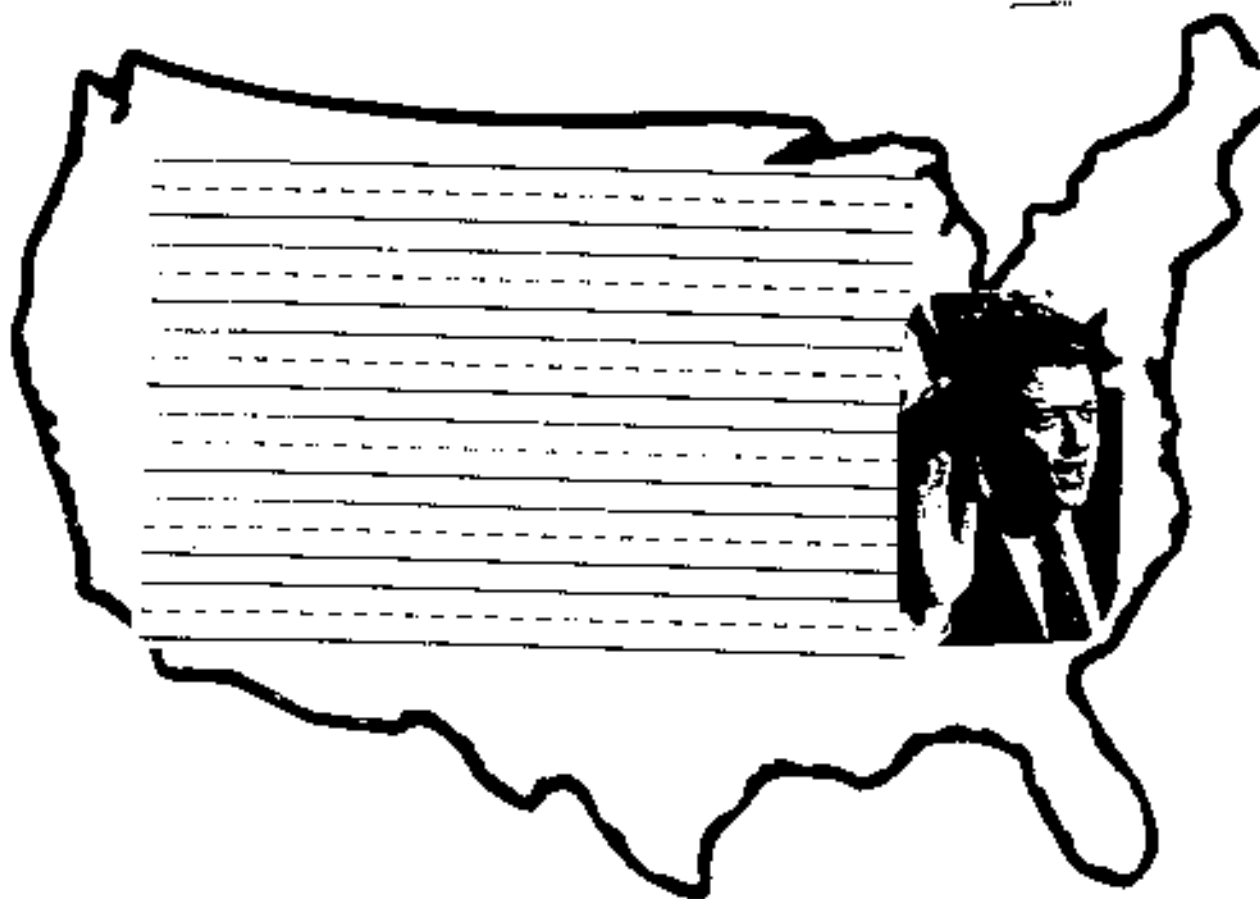
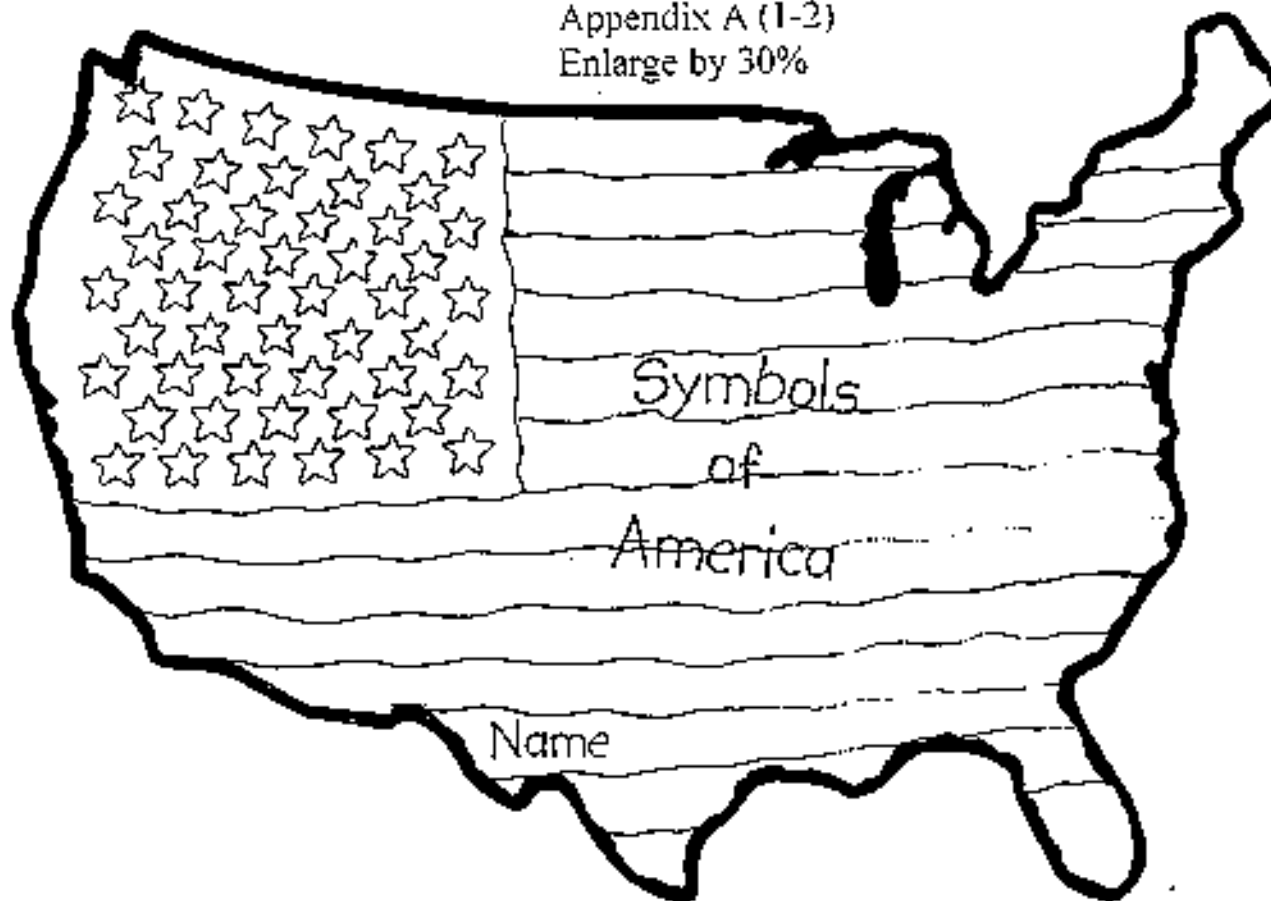
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www.state.sd.us/tourism/rushmore/rushmore.htm

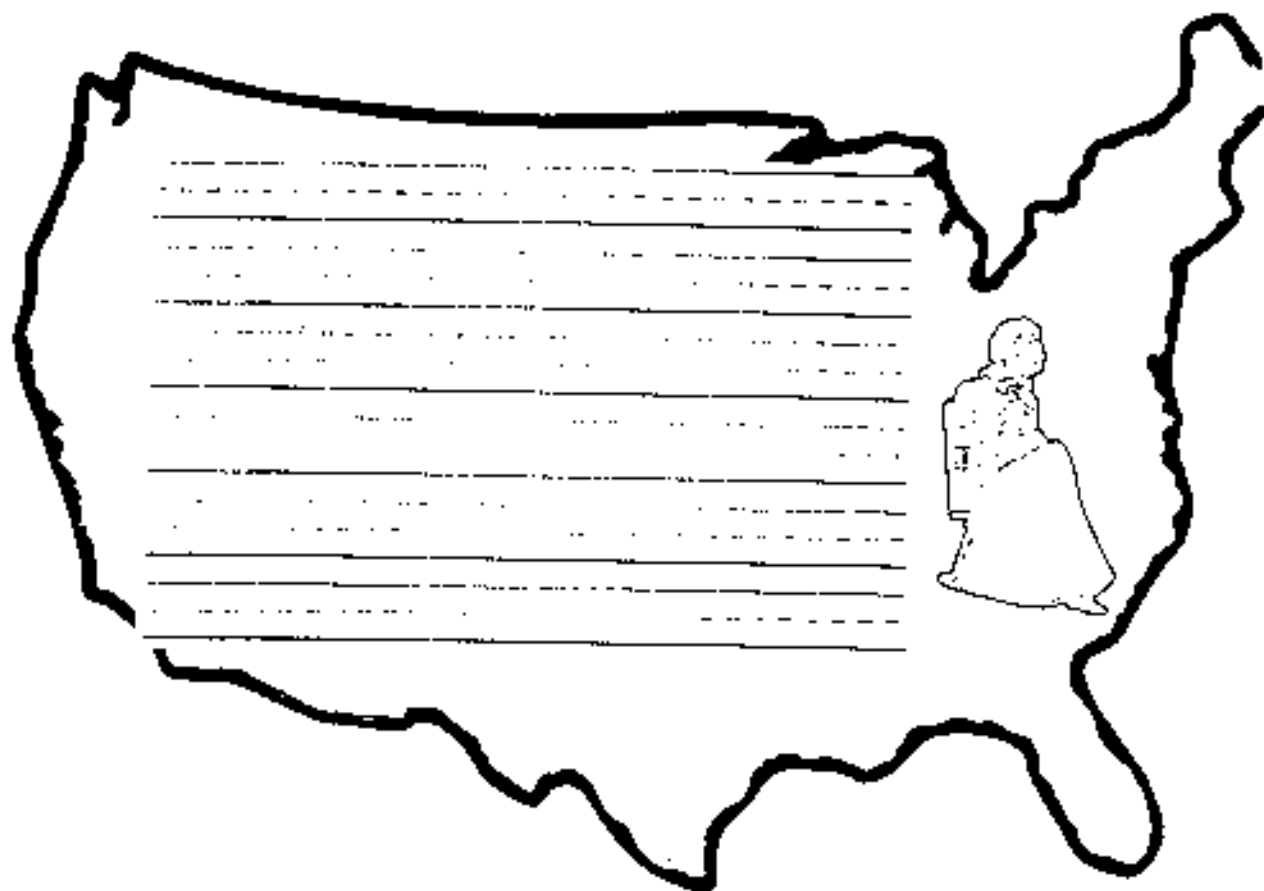
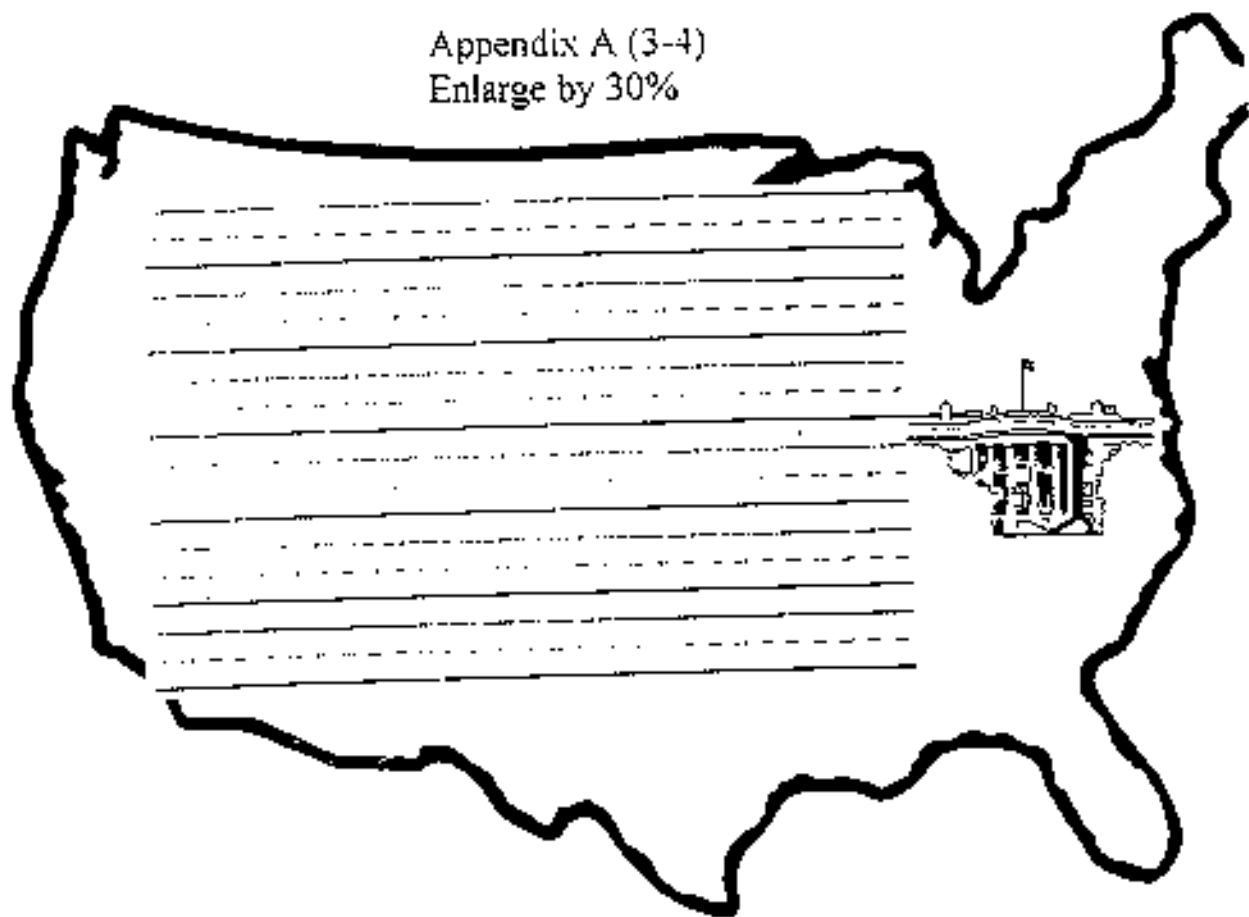
www.whitehouse.gov

www.whitehouse.gov/WH/kids/num/where/num

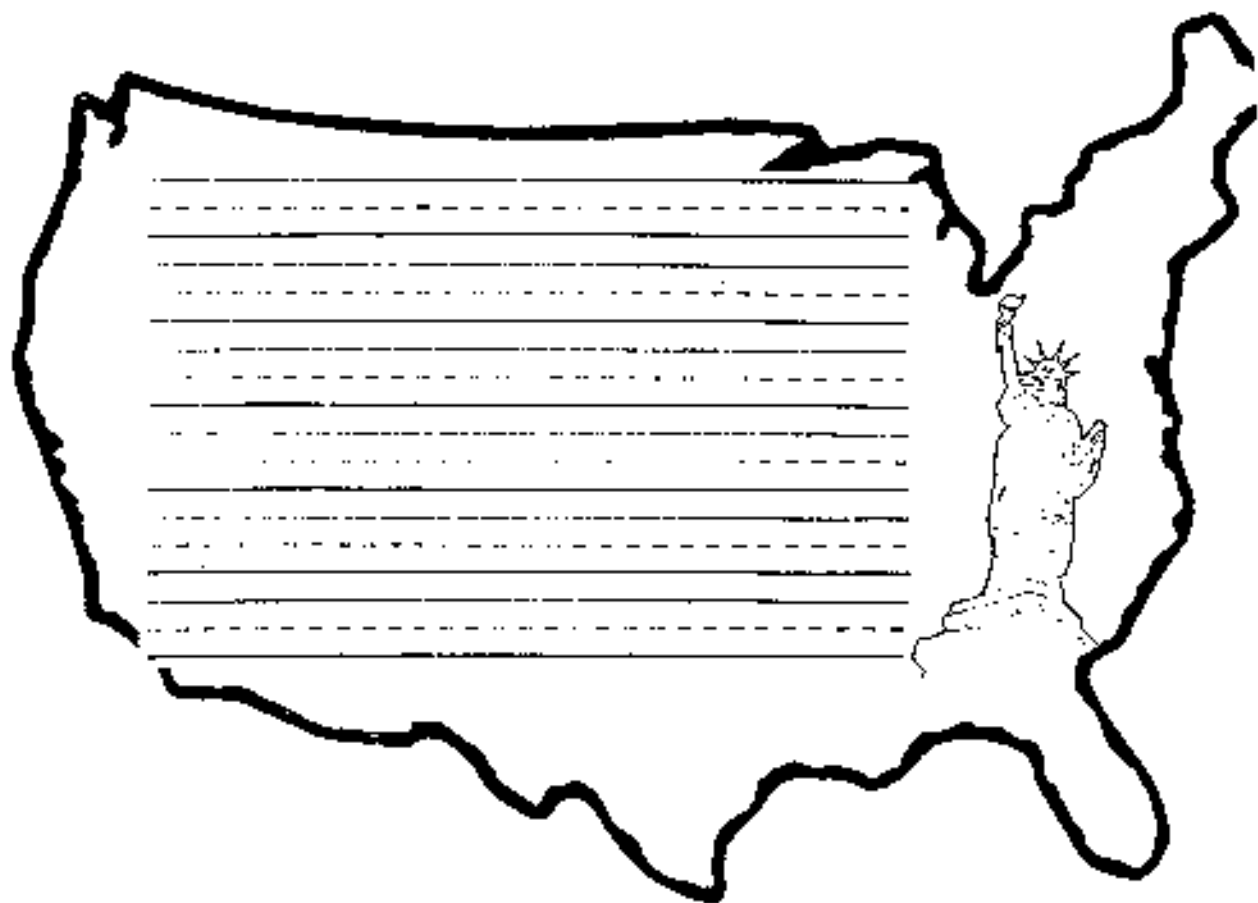
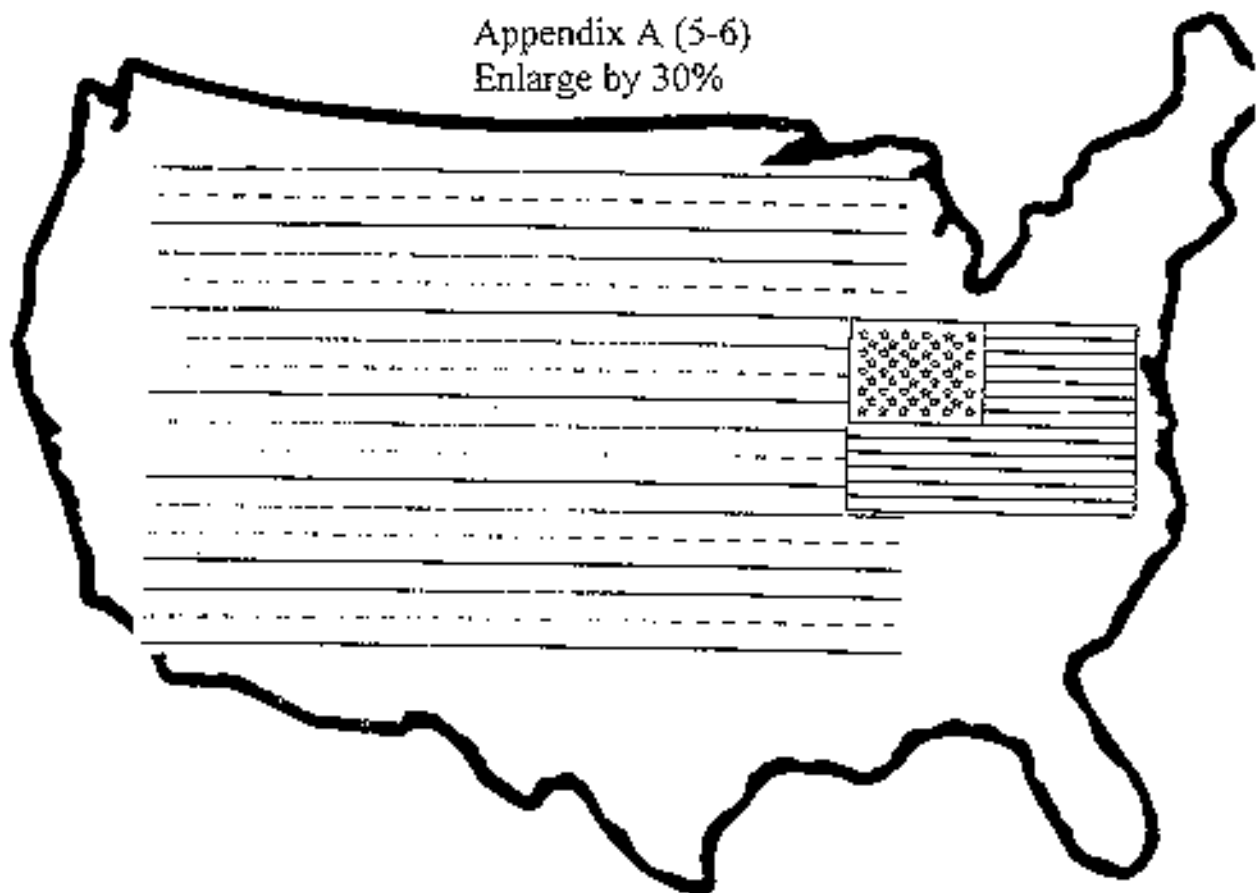
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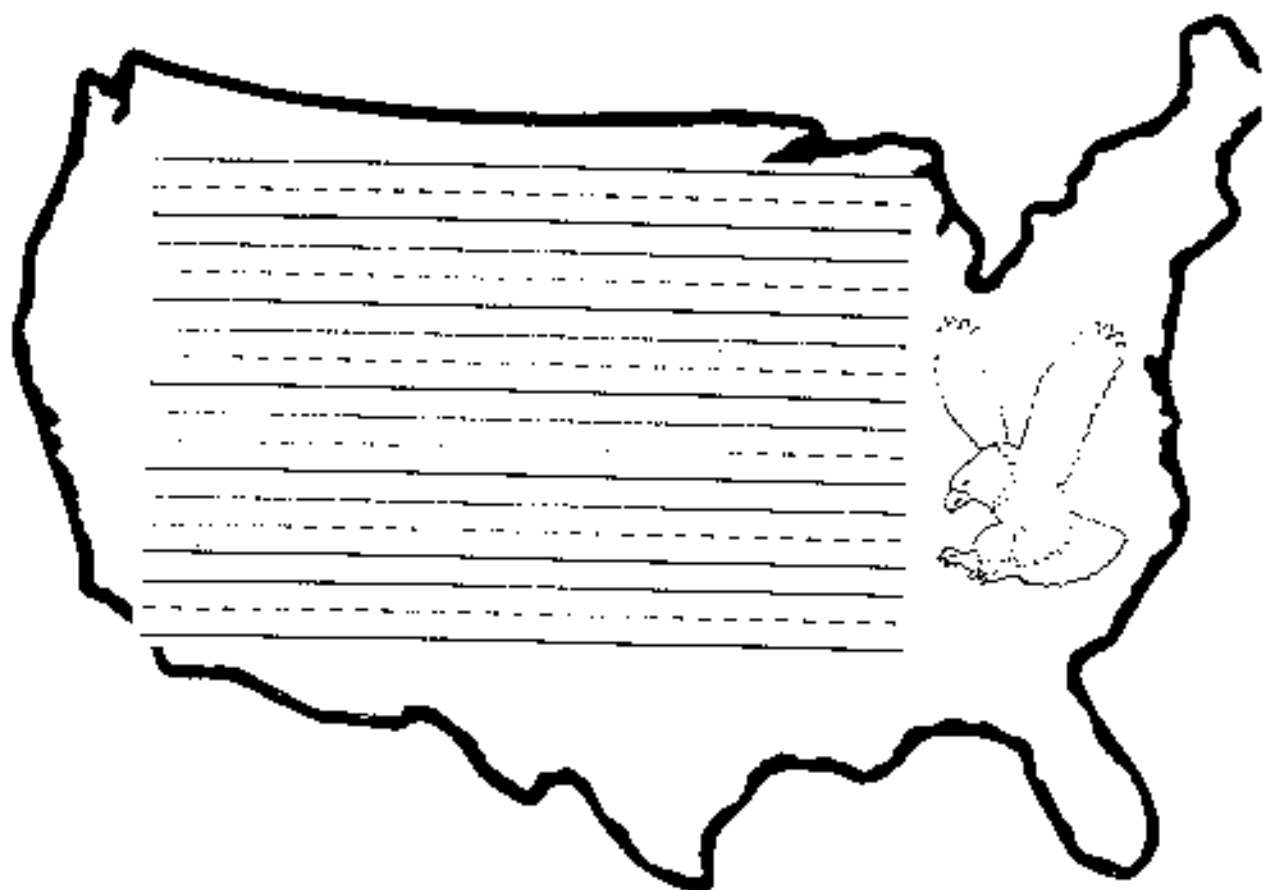
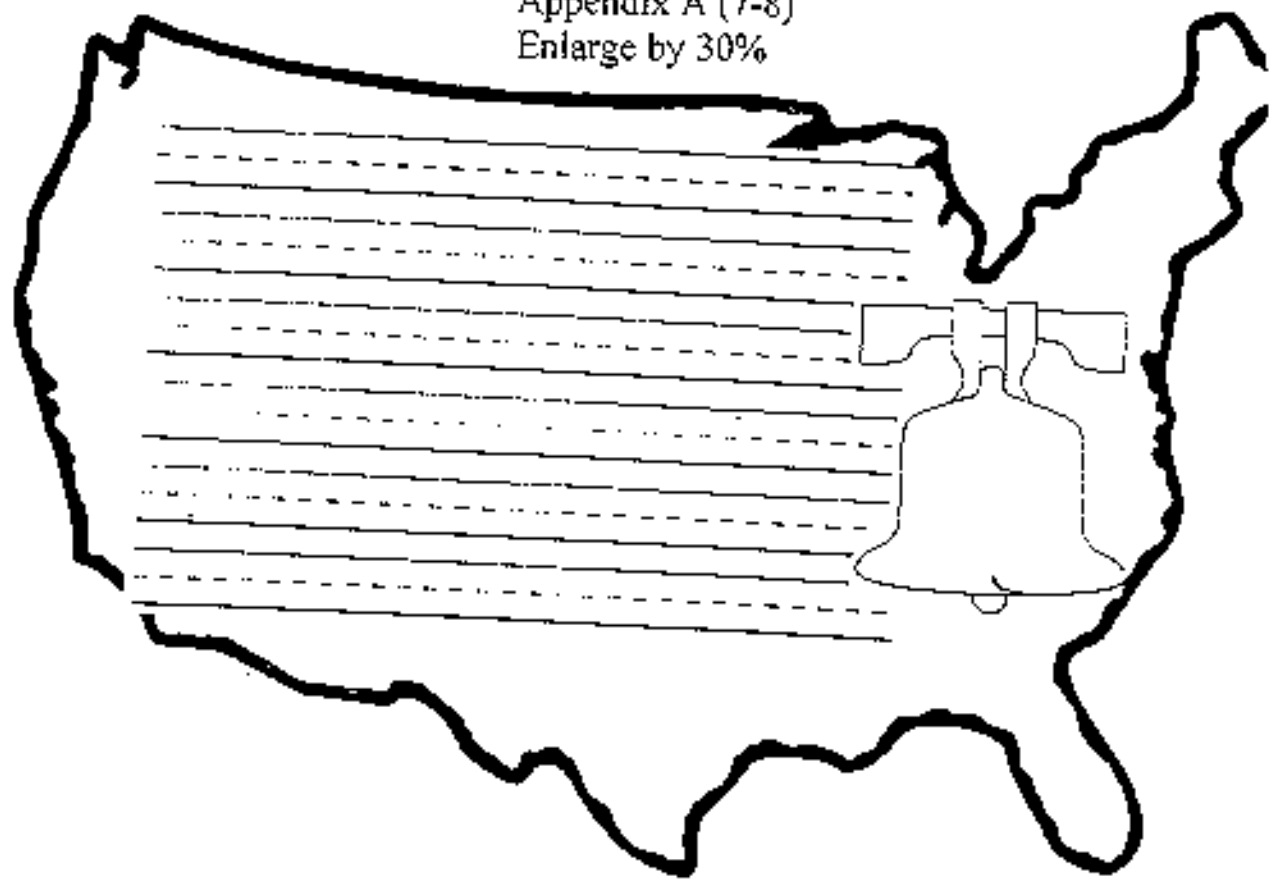
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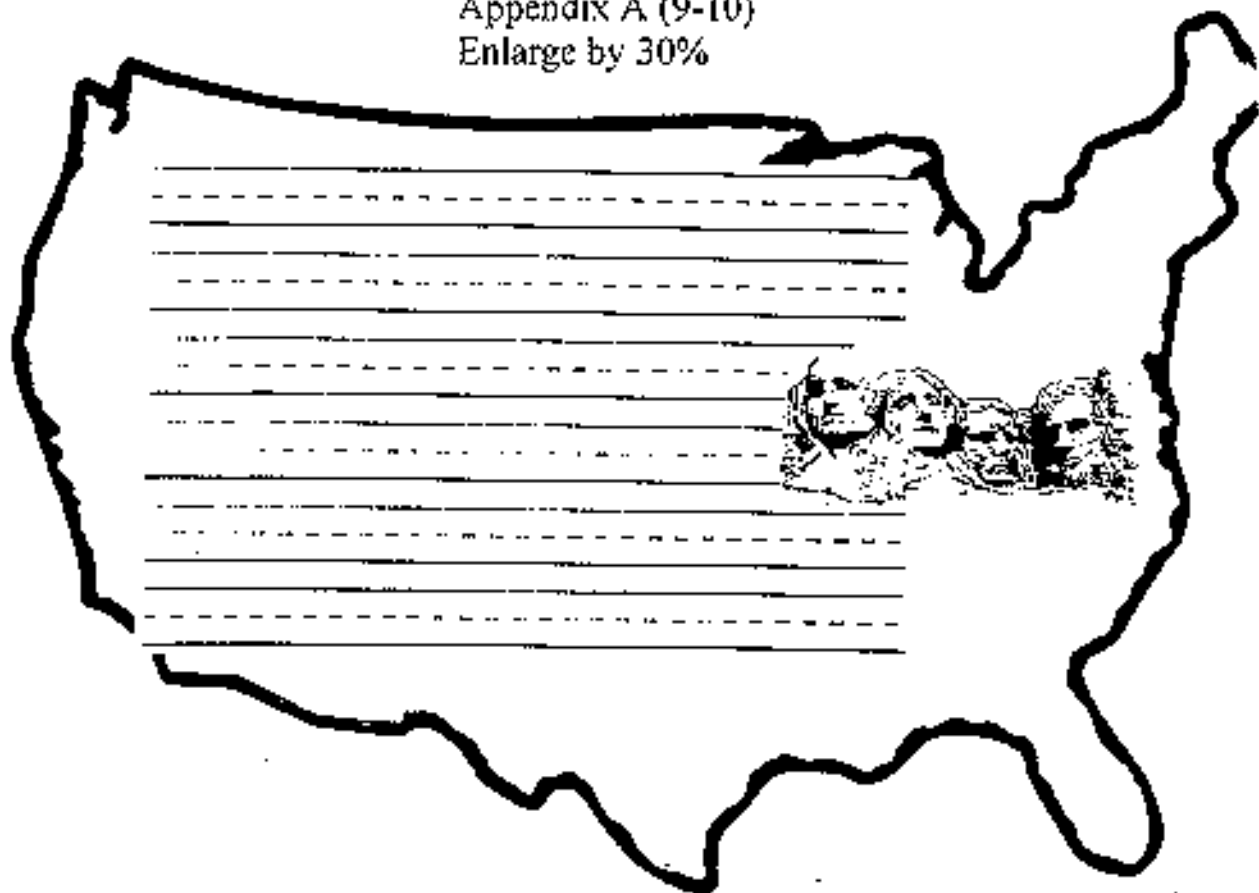
Appendix A (5-6)
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Appendix A (7-8)
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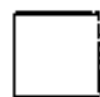
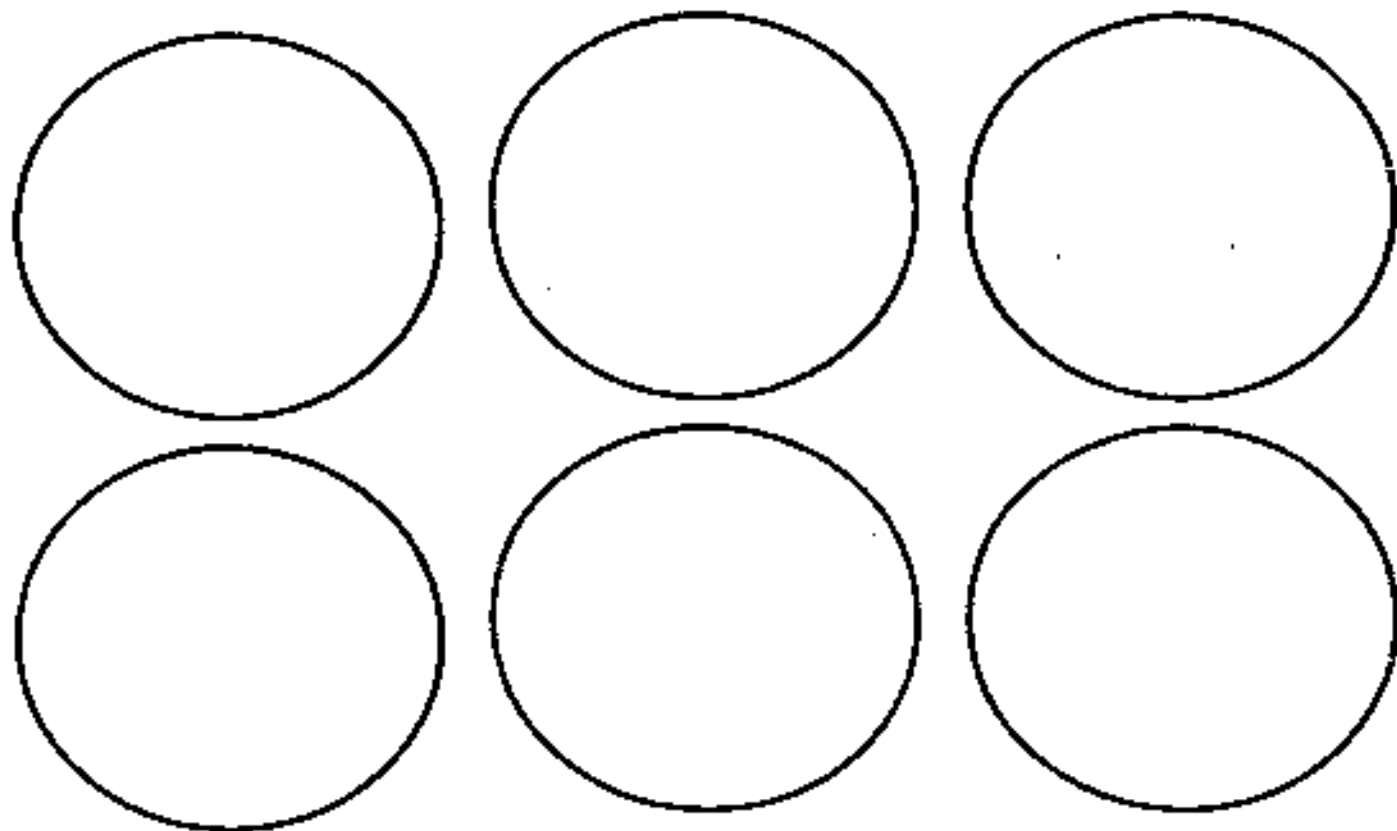


Appendix A (9-10)
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PRINCIPAL OF THE DAY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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name _____

Red**Brown****Blue****Orange****Yellow****Green****Red****Blue****Yellow****Brown****Orange****Green**

Question
Words

When

How

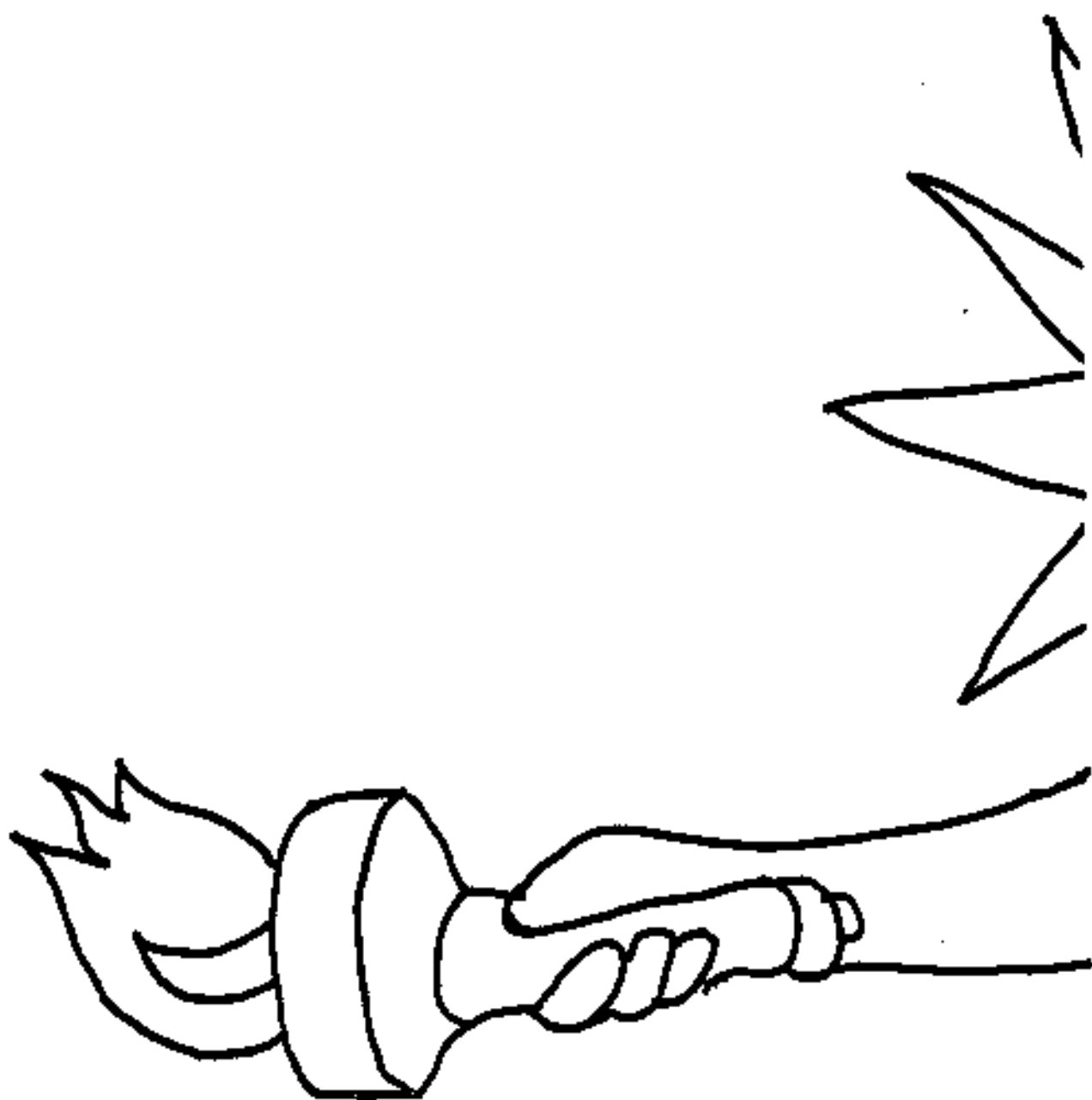
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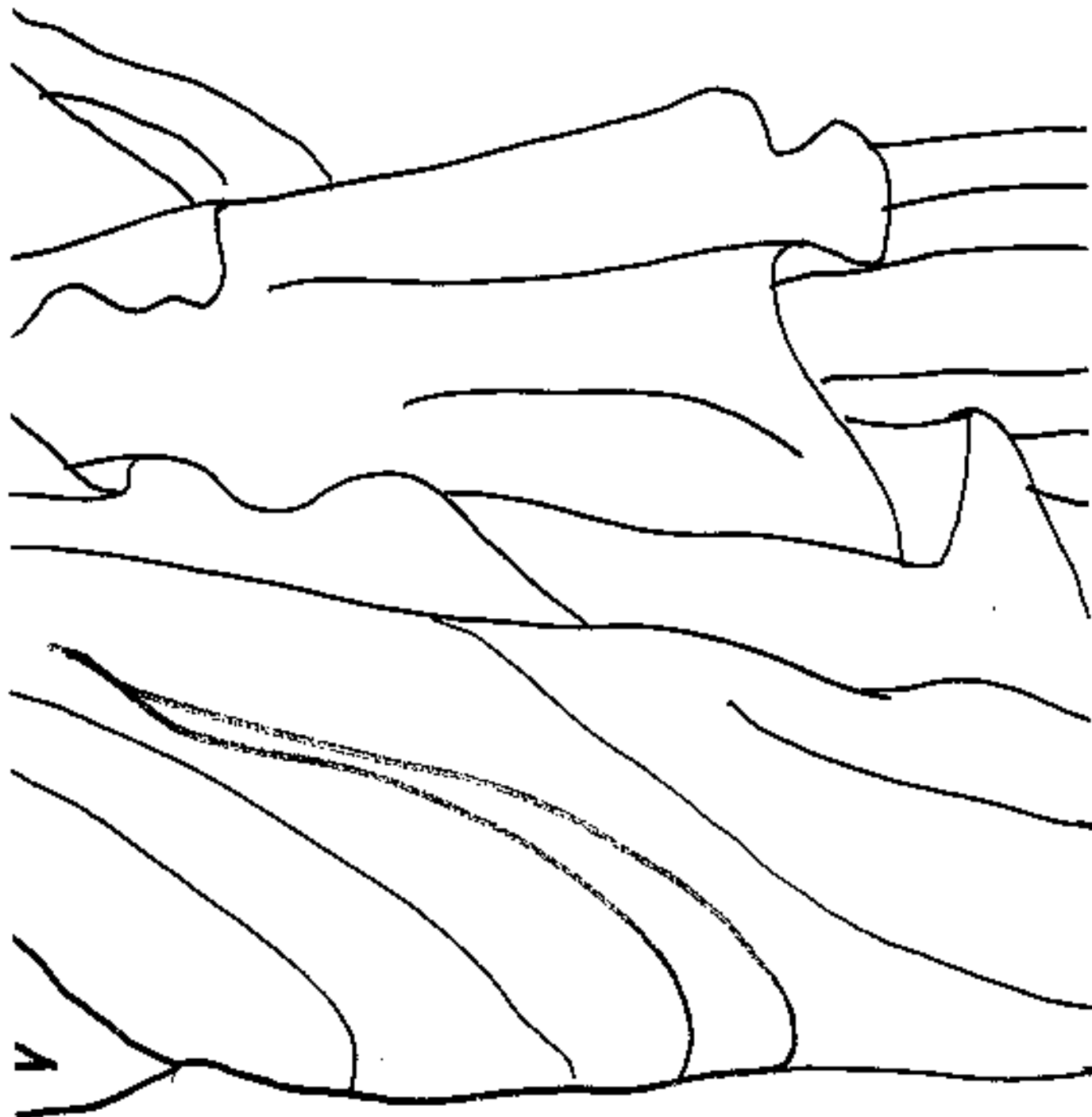
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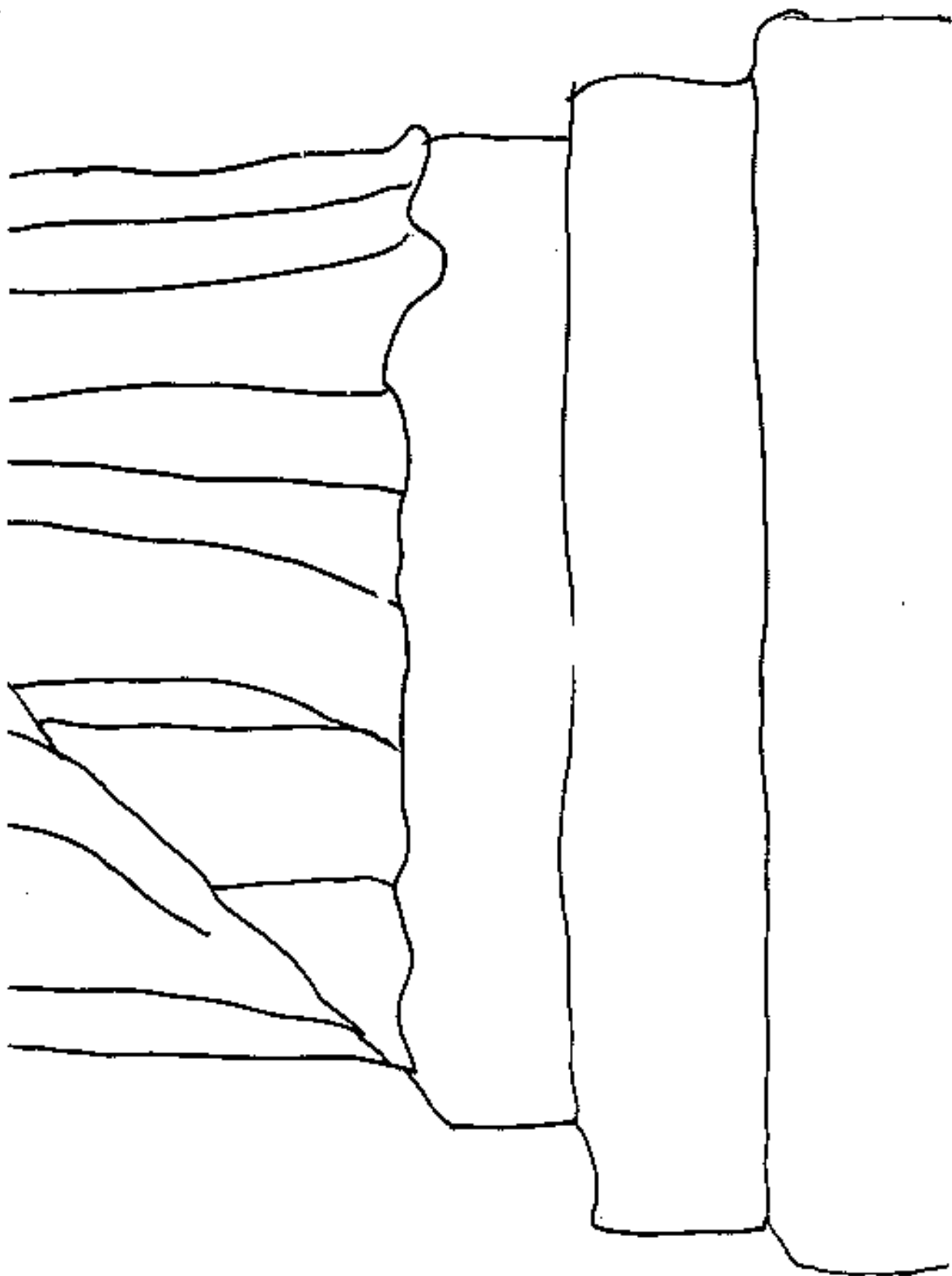


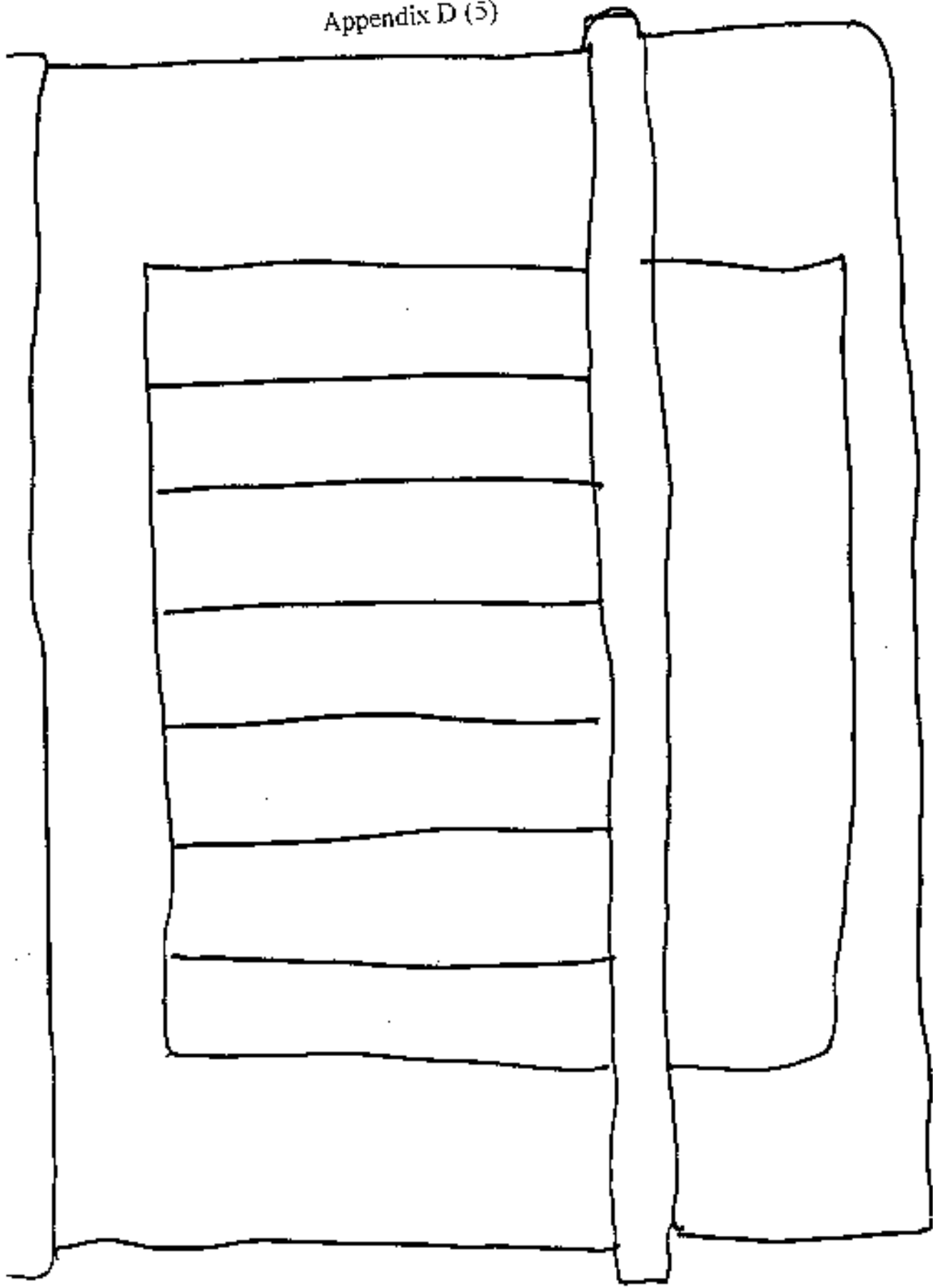


Appendix D (3)



Appendix D (4)

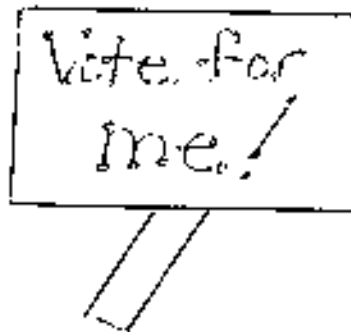
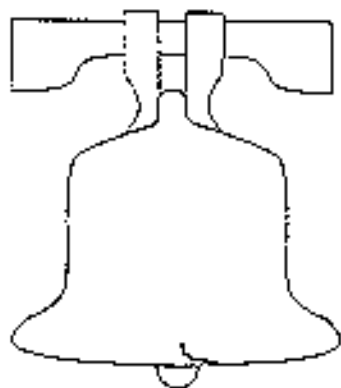
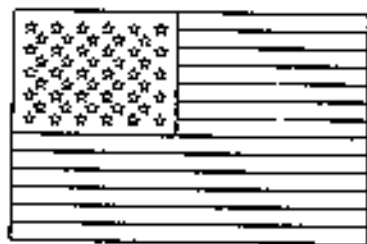




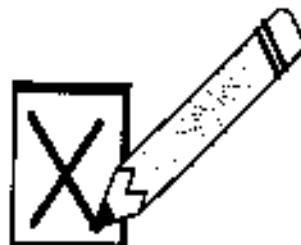
Symbols of America Bingo

Symbols of America

Symbols for Bingo



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